

REPORT OF THE SENATE DELEGATION VISIT TO
ASIA, NOVEMBER 8-17, 1996

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

A delegation from the United States Senate, consisting of Democratic Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), Senator John Glenn (D-OH), Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Senator Dirk Kempthorne (R-ID), met with leading officials in Vietnam, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan during a trip to that region from November 8-17, 1996. The delegation's mission was to explore firsthand U.S. policy issues in this part of the world where the United States has important national security, humanitarian and economic interests.

In each country, the delegation discussed various aspects of U.S. policy with high level government officials. In meetings in Vietnam, they raised a variety of important U.S. policy interests, beginning with the high priority the United States places on resolving remaining cases of U.S. service members reported missing in action (MIA). They also discussed the need for a comprehensive trade agreement and the issues that must be addressed before one can be completed. They raised a number of other issues, including urging greater cooperation on Agent Orange research issues; pressing the need or improvements in Vietnam's human rights practices; requesting that the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi be relocated to a more central location in the city closer to most of the organizations with which it works; and encouraging the Vietnamese to resolve remaining immigration issues and remove existing obstacles to trade.

In these meetings, the Vietnamese expressed a willingness to work with the U.S. to resolve problems in U.S.-Vietnamese bilateral relations. They clearly understood the importance of the MIA issue and pledged cooperation. They appeared to welcome the trade that has taken place in the absence of a comprehensive trade agreement and looked forward to expanding trade with such an agreement. The Vietnamese acknowledged that they had a way to go in modifying their laws and practices to enter fully the international marketplace. In addition, they were eager to have the National Assembly, their legislative branch, host a congressional delegation for the first time. They expressed strong interest in expanding contracts between our respective legislative branches in the future.

The Chinese leaders with whom the delegation met appeared very interested in moving U.S.-Chinese relations in a more positive direction. The delegation had a good exchange of views with the Chinese in a number of areas, including expressing the importance to the United States of human rights practices; the need for improvements in China's trade policies to open its markets and increase opportunities for U.S. exports; and the need for additional attention in the area of nuclear proliferation. They heard varying levels of acknowledgment of U.S. positions and willingness to work with us.

The delegation also discussed with the Chinese the upcoming July 1, 1997 transition in which Hong Kong reverts to Chinese sovereignty. The delegation indicated that it is very important to the U.S. that the transition go smoothly, and the Chinese said that they wished to see that outcome as well. The delegation also met with a wide range of Hong Kong residents to assess their views on the transition. Some were quite optimistic, as were the U.S. businesses with whom the delegation met. Others were more cautious and pointed out the potential for conflict.

The delegation had a number of discussions with leaders in China and Taiwan about the relations between Taiwan and the Mainland.

Both sides indicated that tensions had diminished since the U.S. sent carriers to the Taiwan Straits shortly before Taiwan's March 1996 election. However, the delegation observed a wide gulf between each side's interpretation of the relations between them and the prospects for reunification.

TOM DASCHLE,
JOHN GLENN,
PATRICK LEAHY,
BYRON DORGAN,
DIRK KEMPTHORNE.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, May 7, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,336,081,916,565.07 (five trillion, three hundred thirty-six billion, eighty-one million, nine hundred sixteen thousand, five hundred sixty-five dollars and seven cents).

One year ago, May 7, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,093,910,000,000 (five trillion, ninety-three billion, nine hundred ten million).

Five years ago, May 7, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,883,035,000,000 (three trillion, eight hundred eighty-three billion, thirty-five million).

Ten years ago, May 7, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,272,537,000,000 (two trillion, two hundred seventy-two billion, five hundred thirty-seven million).

Fifteen years ago, May 7, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,057,931,000,000 (one trillion, fifty-seven billion, nine hundred thirty-one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,278,150,916,565.07 (four trillion, two hundred seventy-eight billion, one hundred fifty million, nine hundred sixteen thousand, five hundred sixty-five dollars and seven cents) during the past 15 years.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I observe the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WE CAN SAY WE WERE PART OF
SOMETHING

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the tragic days of the Dirty Thirties are still remembered by many in my State. As an unbreakable drought settled over our region, the fields dried and the crops withered. Hot, dry winds whipped the dust into dark clouds that blew over the land and settled in great drifts on the ground. It was a desperate time for our State. Destitute and facing foreclosure, many South Dakotans had no choice but to abandon the farms in which they had invested countless years of labor. These losses rippled through our economy with a devastating effect, stripping businesses of their livelihood and farmworkers of

their jobs. As the lines of the unemployed grew, so did a feeling of hopelessness among our people.

It was in the midst of this terrible Depression that one of our Nation's greatest Presidents, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, offered hope to the people of South Dakota. Through the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration [WPA], he provided jobs for South Dakotans, and gave us back the dignity that comes with earning your keep. Roosevelt's mark can still be seen across the State, where the thousands of people he put to work left stadiums, sewer systems, and miles of highways and sidewalks as their legacy.

In Milbank, a quiet, friendly town in the northeast corner of my State, the WPA-built municipal water system still ingeniously delivers water from springs outside of town without the work of a single pump. And only recently was the stretch of Highway 12 that runs through Milbank, built by WPA workers and nearly six decades old, finally repaved.

After all Franklin Roosevelt gave to South Dakota and the people of Milbank, I am pleased to say that we have had the rare and wonderful opportunity to give something back to him. Mr. President, last week the long-awaited memorial to Franklin Roosevelt was unveiled. Over 800 feet long, its rough-hewn granite walls form outdoor rooms that honor each of Roosevelt's four terms as President.

I am proud to say that the stone for this memorial was quarried by workers in Milbank. Nearly 60 years after Roosevelt put the citizens of Milbank to work in the WPA, they have again been hard at work for him, cutting and hammering the granite for our memorial to the man who led our Nation through its worst depression and most terrible war.

Quarrying this granite has been a source of deep inspiration and pride for the workers of the Cold Springs Granite Co., which owns the quarry. Often working in the bitter cold, their fierce dedication ensured that the 4,500 hundred tons of stone they cut reached Washington safely and on schedule.

This was no mean feat—to meet the needs of the memorial, the 3-billion-year-old layer of granite that runs beneath Milbank was cut in pieces weighing up to 100 tons. These monstrous stones then had to be carefully raised, without cracking or falling, from the base of a pit 140 feet beneath the ground. Once they reached the surface, the stones were sent by flatbed truck to Cold Springs, MN, where workers shaped them according to the models of Lawrence Halprin, the designer of the monument. According to workers like Frank Hermans, who has worked in the quarry his entire adult life, the job gave him and his coworkers the chance to leave their mark in history. "We can say we were part of something," he said. "Not many get the chance to say that."